# Project Charter

## A. General Information

*Provide basic information about the project including: Project Title – The proper name used to identify this project; Project Working Title – The working name or acronym that will be used for the project; Proponent Secretary – The Secretary to whom the proponent agency is assigned or the Secretary that is sponsoring an enterprise project; Proponent Agency – The agency that will be responsible for the management of the project; Prepared by – The person(s) preparing this document.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Project Title:* | Virginia Educational Information Management System | *Project Working Title:* | Virginia EIMS |
| *Proponent Secretary:* | Secretary of Education | *Proponent Agency:* | Department of Education |
| *Prepared by:* | B. Canada | | |

### Points of Contact

List the principal individuals who may be contacted for information regarding the project.

| Position | Title/Name/Organization | Phone | E-mail |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Project Sponsor* | Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jo Lynne DeMary | 804-225-2023 | jdemary@mail.vak12ed.edu |
| *Program Manager* | Lan Neugent, Assistant Superintendent for Technology | 804-225-2757 | lneugent@mail.vak12ed.edu |
| *Project Manager* | Bethann Canada (Interim) | 804-225-2951 | bcanada@mail.vak12ed.edu |
| *Proponent Cabinet Secretary* | Belle Wheelan | 804-786-1151 | bwheelan@gov.state.va.us |
| *Proponent Agency Head* | Jo Lynne DeMary | 804-225-2023 | jdemary@mail.vak12ed.edu |
| *Customer (User) Representative(s)* | Shelley Loving-Ryder, Assistant Superintendent for Assessment and Reporting | 804-225-2936 | sryder@mail.vak12ed.edu |
| | Janet Christopher, Data Administration Manager | 804-786-1212 | jchristo@mail.vak12ed.edu |

## B. Executive Summary

*An Executive Summary is required when Sections C thru G of the charter are excessively long. In two or three paragraphs, provide a brief overview of this project and the contents of this document.*

The Virginia Department of Education wishes to implement a statewide educational information management system, Virginia EIMS that will allow school divisions to maintain their current local student information systems, input data into Web-based systems, meet student-level data reporting requirements, and maintain security of student information. At the core of this system is assignment of a unique "Testing Identifier" assigned to each student in the state that is permanent, unduplicated, and ubiquitous.

The major components of the EIMS are: 1) the Testing Identifier that will be used to match student assessment results with demographic and program participation information, 2) the ability to pre-identify students for SOL assessments, 3) decision-support tools that will enable the Department of Education and school division staff members to make important instructional decisions using accurate and timely information, 4) a training component to enhance decision making through the use of decision-support tools, 5) a reporting component to enable the Department of Education to respond promptly to state and federal requests, including No Child Left Behind, 6) data loaders that enable school divisions to extract data from their student information systems and load them into the EIMS database, 7) secure transfer of student data to and from schools over the Internet, and 8) program participation components that may be added on to Virginia EIMS when the core system is implemented.

## C. Project Purpose

*Explain the business reason(s) for doing this project. The Project Purpose (the Business Problem and Project Business Objectives) is in the Project Proposal, Section B.*

### 1. Business Problem

*The Business Problem is a question, issue, or situation, pertaining to the business, which needs to be answered or resolved. State in specific terms the problem or issue this project will resolve. Often, the Business Problem is reflected as a critical business issue or initiative in the Agency's Strategic Plan or IT Strategic Plan.*

***Implementing student-based data collection and reporting*** is identified as a critical business issue in the Department of Education *Agency Strategic Plan*. The EIMS will enable the Department of Education to meet state and federal reporting requirements and stakeholders at all levels of education to make informed educational decisions based on accurate and timely information.

To meet this critical need, the Department of Education wishes to implement a statewide student information system that will allow school divisions to maintain their current student information systems, input data into Web-based systems, meet student-level data reporting requirements, and maintain security of student information. At the core of this system is assignment of a unique "Testing Identifier" assigned to each student in the state that is permanent, unduplicated, and ubiquitous.

While Virginia is recognized as a leader among states for its high-quality education system, we lag behind other states in our ability to analyze and report timely and accurate information about student and school performance. There is a growing demand for education information that must be met without overburdening the schools to submit more reports. The *No Child Left Behind Act*

*of 2001,* a new federal education law that provides almost $300 million annually for education in Virginia, mandates a structured reporting format that requires disaggregation of student data, annual assessment of students, and complex school ratings. While individual student assessment records are available for any given test, the lack of a permanent unique identifier, makes it impossible to gauge the progress of any given student.

Over two million Standards of Learning Assessments were administered to Virginia's 1.2 million students in the 2001-2002 school year. This number is projected to increase to more than 2.5 million in 2005-2006 when the additional testing requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* are phased in. School divisions must hand code detailed student demographic information on to a "bubble form" for each test taken or pay a high price to have their forms pre-coded by the testing vendor ($ .26 per student per test). This coding system is antiquated, time-consuming, and fraught with errors.

Currently, Virginia school divisions submit dozens of major reports throughout the year in order to comply with state and federal reporting requirements. Many staff hours are spent at the school, division, and state levels generating, reviewing, and verifying these reports. The payback from Virginia EIMS includes improving the quality of education for Virginia students by redirecting the time and resources of teachers, guidance counselors, clerical staff, and other administrators (estimated to be 241,000 hours annually) away from paperwork and toward tasks that directly benefit students.

A longitudinal student record system will enable Virginia to respond to increased demands for timely education performance information with less difficulty, will greatly improve the quality of Virginia education data, and will ultimately result in a reduction of the reporting burden on Virginia's schools and school divisions.

## 2. Project Business Objectives

*Define the specific Business Objectives of the project that correlate to the strategic initiatives or issues identified in the Commonwealth or Agency Strategic Plan. Every Business Objective must relate to at least one strategic initiative or issue and every initiative or issue cited must relate to at least one project business objective.*

| Commonwealth or Agency Strategic Plan – Critical Issues | Project Business Objectives |
|---|---|
| **Implementing student-based data collection and reporting** | Meet reporting requirements of NCLB and other state/federal mandates. Identify schools and divisions for improvement and corrective action. Communicate assessment results early enough to take corrective action. Foster data-driven decision making. Develop standard data definitions and reporting formats. |
| **Implementing the NCLB Act** | Hold schools and divisions accountable for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), including participation in the Standards of Learning Assessments. Develop and administer additional Standards of Learning Assessments. Produce annual school, division, and state report cards. |

| Tracking student progress | Assist parents and school divisions in monitoring student progress on the Standards of Learning assessments for verified credits required to earn a high school diploma. |
|---|---|
| Closing the achievement gap | Provide timely information on student performance to assist schools in monitoring progress toward closing the achievement gap among various subgroups of students, including minority students, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities. |
| Improving reading skills | Provide timely information on student performance in reading to assist schools in expanding programs to improve reading performance. |
| Helping low-performing schools | Provide timely information that will help the department use data to identify areas for improvement as we assist schools in developing unique strategies to meet the needs of students. Assist schools in establishing systems to collect, analyze, and use data to make instructional decisions. |
| Focusing on customer service and parent involvement | Provide students and their families with accurate and timely information about student performance and progress toward graduation. Share anticipated gains in educational performance with a broad audience consisting of parents, students, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and the public in general. Consolidate various state and federal reporting requirements into Virginia EIMS, freeing school division personnel to focus more time on student instruction. |

## D.  Assumptions

*Assumptions are statements taken for granted or accepted as true without proof.  Assumptions are made in the absence of fact.  List and describe the assumptions made in the decision to charter this project.*

Virginia EIMS will be fully staffed and funded for implementation and ongoing expenses, including school division support components.

School divisions will retain their current student information systems, but will be expected to incorporate the state Testing Identifier for state reporting.

The primary focus of the project is to implement the first seven components of Virginia EIMS as defined in Section E of this charter. Implementation of Component 8, Program Participation, will be a cost option for the Department of Education to consider at a later time.

## E.  Project Description, Scope and Management Milestones

## 1.  *Project Description*

*Describe the project approach, specific solution, customer(s), and benefits. The Project Description is located in the Project Proposal, Section C.*

The Project Approach

The Department of Education has made significant progress in understanding and implementing various aspects of the new law since the NCLB Act was signed by president Bush on January 8, 2002. A major portion of this understanding was the impact of the requirements of the law on information systems. The department also studied the implementation of longitudinal student information systems by other states, and collected documents about other state's system requirements.

Additionally, the department contracted with Evaluation Software Publishing (ESP), a nationally recognized expert in educational information at the school, division, state, and federal levels. ESP has identified 13 tasks that states need to complete to implement longitudinal student information systems. Further research was conducted to determine Virginia's implementation status.

| Task | Virginia's Status |
|------|-------------------|
| 1. Develop a real-time directory of state education personnel that is Web-based | Complete |
| 2. Develop a secure sign-on system that provides authentication of data providers and users that is managed by school divisions for their data providers. | Compete |
| 3. Implement Web-based data entry and file submission. | Complete for major data collections. |
| 4. Form a broad-based advisory group of school division personnel. | The Student Information Advisory Group (SIAG) was formed in 2000 and continues to meet regularly. |
| 5. Form a project management team of DOE business area representatives that will guide the implementation of Virginia EIMS. | Project management team established. On-going meetings are in progress. |
| 6. Develop a statewide education data dictionary with standard definitions and codes. | Development is in progress for essential components of the student record. The SIAG is guiding this effort. |
| 7. Develop a data analysis and reporting capability within DOE. | Not started. |
| 8. Conduct a student record collection. | An initial collection was conducted in September 2003. This step "introduces" the concept of a student record collection to school divisions. |
| 9. Meet the requirements of NCLB, including determining Adequate Yearly Progress and report cards. | An integral component of Virginia EIMS, the phase-in of these activities is described in Virginia's *Accountability Workbook*, approved by the U.S. Department of Education on June 10, 2003. |
| 10. Developed detailed requirements and a | In progress. In addition, the department |

| | |
|---|---|
| Request for Proposals. | proposed Virginia EIMS for consideration as a major project for the Education Oversight Committee and the Commonwealth CIO. |
| 11. Conduct statewide implementation Virginia EIMS. | Not started. |
| 12. Provide resources to assist school divisions with implementation of Virginia EIMS. | Not started. Occurs concurrent with Task 11. |
| 13. Maintain and support Virginia EIMS. | Not started. Ongoing after 2006. |

The study concluded that the Virginia Department of Education had the capacity to succeed with Virginia EIMS, given adequate resources and support. The department has a track record of successful project completion, both in-house and contracted; and a stable and standards-based technology architecture.

In addition to the study by ESP, the Department of Education has determined that the following must be included in the detailed system requirements of Virginia EIMS.

The system must be consistent with the Commonwealth of Virginia (COVA) Enterprise Architecture and the Governor's *Strategic Plan for Technology*.

The system must adhere to COVA Policies, Standards and Guidelines for information security. Development of the system must adhere to COVA project management guidelines.
The system must comply with state and federal requirements for handicap access, the Family Education and Right to Privacy Act (FERPA), the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and Virginia *Guidelines for the Management of Student Records*.

The Department of Education will develop detailed requirements for the system components identified in the following chart.

| System Component | Customer(s) Served | Expected Benefit(s) |
|---|---|---|
| Training Component | Schools, Divisions, State | Ability to use the information gathered for more informed educational decision-making |
| Testing Identifier Component | Schools, Divisions, State | Data accuracy, ability to gauge individual student progress over time. |
| Decision Support Component | Public, Schools, Divisions, State | Standard tools for data analysis. Savings to school divisions. |
| Data Loader Component | Schools, Divisions, State | Eliminates costly and redundant effort of mapping and loading the data into various systems. |
| Data Transfer Component | Divisions, State | Standard ASCII and XML reduce redundant programming time and support vendor- |

| | | independence. |
|---|---|---|
| Reporting Component | Schools, Divisions, State | Standard and ad-hoc reports eliminate redundant effort, meet federal and state requirements. |
| Pre-Identification Component | Schools, Divisions, State | Data accuracy, time and money savings for school divisions and state. |
| Program Participation Components | Schools, Divisions, State | Data accuracy, time and money savings for school divisions and state. Ability to meet multiple federal and state reporting requirements. |

## 2. Scope

*The Project Scope defines all of the products and services provided by a project, and identifies the limits of the project. In other words, the Project Scope establishes the boundaries of a project. The Project Scope addresses the who, what, where, when, and why of a project.*

Who: the Virginia Department of Education, working collaboratively with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, the Secretaries of Education and Technology, the Department of Planning and Budget, and other state agencies as required, will develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of Virginia EIMS. The Department of Education will be the lead agency for the project. The primary users of Virginia EIMS will be the Department of Education and Virginia school divisions.

What: Virginia EIMS, a statewide student information system consisting of the first seven system components defined previously in this section, and at the department's option, portions of the eighth component.

When: The Virginia EIMS project will commence immediately upon the acceptance of this charter and the project proposal by the appropriate parties. It is anticipated that award of the Virginia EIMS contract will take place in winter 2003. At that time, a detailed project timeline will be developed by the Department of Education and the selected vendor. Project close out must take place on or before June 30, 2006.

Why: The Department of Education and Virginia school divisions have a critical need to base educational decisions on timely and accurate information and to meet state and federal reporting requirements.

### 3. *Summary of Major Management Milestones and Deliverables*

*Provide a list of Project Management Milestones and Deliverables (see Section E of the Project Proposal Document). This list of deliverables is not the same as the products and services provided, but is specific to management of the project. An example of a Project Management Milestone is the Project Plan Completed.*

| Event | Estimated Date | Estimated Duration |
|---|---|---|
| *Project Charter Approved* | 1/7/2004 | 1 month |
| *Project Plan Completed* | 1/15/2004 | 1 month |
| *Project Plan Approved* | 1/30/2004 | 2 weeks |
| *Project Execution – Started* | 2/1/2004 | 5 month pilot followed by full implementation |
| *Project Execution Completed* | 6/30/2006 | 2 years |
| *Project Closed Out* | 6/30/2006 | |

## F. Project Authority

*Describe the authority of the individual or organization initiating the project, any management constraints, management oversight of the project, and the authority granted to the Project Manager.*

### 1. *Authorization*

*Name the project approval authority that is committing organization resources to the project. Identify the source of this authority. The source of the approval authority often resides in code or policy and is related to the authority of the individual's position or title.*

Jo Lynne DeMary, Superintendent of Public Instruction, has committed Department of Education resources to the Virginia EIMS project.

Mark R. Warner, Governor of Virginia, has committed funding to the EIMS project.

### 2. *Project Manager*

*Name the Project Manager and define his or her role and responsibility over the project. Depending on the project's complexities, include how the Project Manager will control matrixed organizations and employees.*

Bethann Canada, director of information technology, will serve as interim project manager until a permanent manager is appointed. The Project Manager is empowered to manage the day-to-day aspects of the project and via the Project Management Team, reports exceptions to the Superintendent's Executive Committee.

### 3. *Oversight*

*Describe the Commonwealth or Agency Oversight controls over the project.*

Due to the projected cost and critical nature of the project, Virginia EIMS is considered a major IT Project. Oversight for the project will be provided by representatives from the Education and Technology Secretariats. The Department of Education is prepared to provide regular status reports to the Oversight Committee.

Regular project status reports will be provided by the Assistant Superintendent for Technology at the weekly meetings of the Superintendent's Executive Committee (Agency Internal Oversight Committee). The EIMS project will be guided by a Project Management Team consisting of high-level business area representatives and the department's Internal Auditor.

## G. Project Organization

### 1. Project Organization Chart
*Provide a graphic depiction of the project team. The graphical representation is a hierarchal diagram of the project organization that begins with the project sponsor and includes the project team and other stakeholders.*
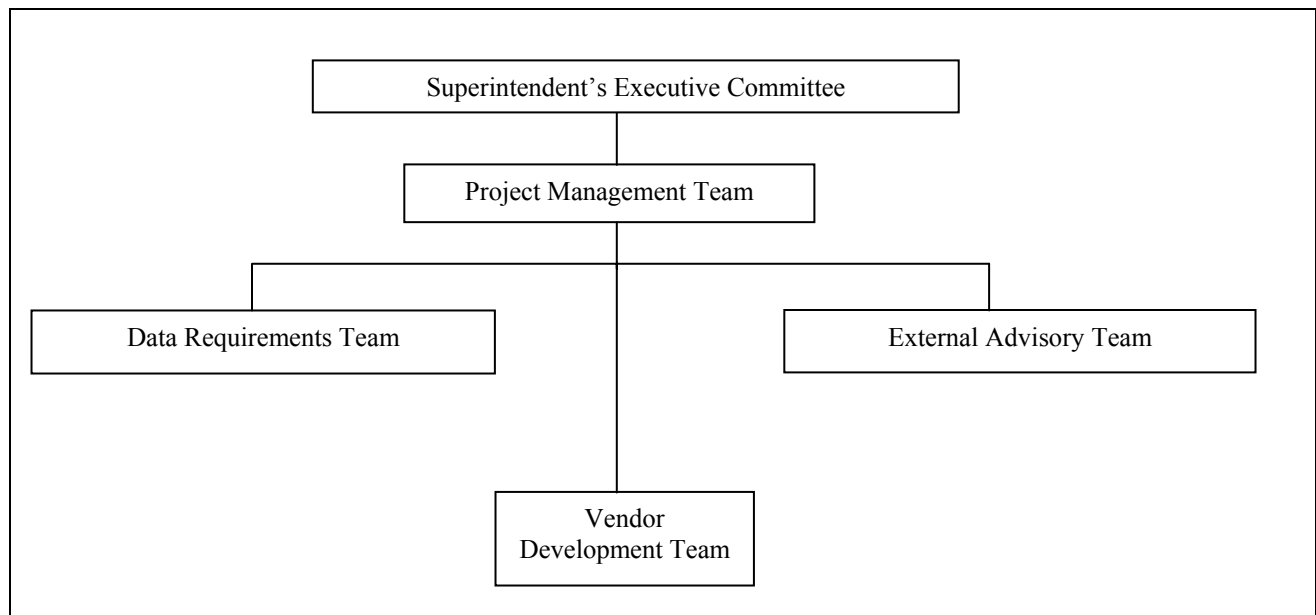


### 2. Organization Description
*Describe the type of organization used for the project team, its makeup, and the lines of authority.*

***The Superintendent's Executive Committee (Internal Oversight Committee)*** , consisting of the Assistant Superintendents, meets weekly. They receive regular project updates from the Program Manager, the Assistant Superintendent for Technology.

***The Project Management Team*** consists of high-level business area representatives and the Project Leader. The PMT is lead by the Program Manager. The project management team provides leadership and direction to the project teams.

***The Data Requirements Team*** is lead by the Manager of Data Administration. This team consists of members of the Data Coordinating Committee, a long-standing Department of Education group that coordinates data collection requirements.

**The External Advisory Team** consists of various school division advisory groups, including the Student Information Advisory Group, the Superintendent's Leadership Advisory Council, the Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee, and all school division student information systems contacts.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

*Describe, at a minimum, the Roles and Responsibilities of all stakeholders identified in the organizational diagram above. Some stakeholders may exist whom are not part of the formal project team but have roles and responsibilities related to the project. Include these stakeholders' roles and responsibilities also.*

**The Superintendent's Executive Committee** acts in an advisory capacity to the Program Manager and makes resource commitments to the project team as needed. Project critical issues and exceptions are referred to the Executive Committee for resolution.

**The Project Management Team** provides leadership and general direction to the tactical teams and reviews work products. This team refers critical issues and exceptions to the Executive Committee.

**The Data Collection Requirements Team** is responsible for providing Virginia EIMS data collection requirements to the RFP Development Team. This team will be responsible for communicating data collection requirements to school divisions.

**The External Advisory Team** is responsible for advising the department on Virginia EIMS issues as they relate to school divisions. DOE representatives will update various advisory groups at their regular meetings and take feedback to the Project Management Team.

## H. Resources

*Identify the initial funding, personnel, and other resources, committed to this project by the project sponsor. Additional resources may be committed upon completion of the detailed project plan.*

| Resources | Allocation and Source |
|---|---|
| *Funding* | 15.2 million, state and federal funds |
| *Project Team (Full and Part Time Staff)* | 1 full-time project manager<br>4 full-time staff |

| Customer Support | Staff above will provide customer support in addition to vendor. |
| Facilities | None-required. Product resides on a hosted service site. |
| Equipment | None-required. Product resides on a hosted service site. |
| Software Tools | None-required. Product is being developed by vendor. |
| Other | Funding for school division implementation. |

## I.  Signatures

*The Signatures of the people below document approval of the formal Project Charter.  The Project Manager is empowered by this charter to proceed with the project as outlined in the charter.*

| Position/Title | Signature/Printed Name/Title | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Proponent Cabinet Secretary (as required) | Belle Wheelan, Secretary of Education | |
| Proponent Agency Head | Jo Lynne DeMary, Superintendent of Public Instruction | |
| Project Sponsor (required) | Jo Lynne DeMary, Superintendent of Public Instruction | |
| Program Manager | Lan Neugent, Assistant Superintendent for Technology | |
| Project Manager (required) | Bethann Canada, Director of Information Technology | |
| Other Stakeholders as needed | Shelley Loving-Ryder, Assistant Superintendent for Assessment | |
| Other Stakeholders as needed | Janet Christopher, Manager of Data Administration | |